

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1864

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PFOR, GR, TU

SUBJECT: TURKISH MILITARY EXERCISE IN AEGEAN--MARCH 9-10, 1976

REF: USDAO ATHENS (DTG 271545Z FEB 76)

1. WE WISH TO DRAW DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION TO REFTEL WHICH DESCRIBES LATEST TURKISH COMBINED AIR-NAVAL EXERCISE IN THE AEGEAN. THE AREAS SPECIFIED BY THE GOT IN ITS REQUEST TO THE GOG FOR ISSUANCE OF A NTAM APPEAR TO BE WHOLLY IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND AIRSPACE AND THUS WOULD NOT POSE THE POTENTIAL FOR CONFRONTATION OVER DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS OF AIRSPACE WHICH WERE A FEATURE OF THE PRELUDE TO THE EXERCISE OF FEBRUARY 25-26. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, ANOTHER REASON FOR CONCERN IS THAT THE EXERCISE AREA SPECIFIED BY THE GOT FOR THE FIRST TIME WOULD ISOLATE GREEK TERRITORY, THE ISLAND OF MYTILINI. ONCE AGAIN, THE GOT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN CAREFUL IN HAVING THEIR EXERCISE PERIOD AVOID THE SCHEDULED FLIGHT TIMES OF THE TWO DAILY OLYMPIC FLIGHTS TO AND FROM MYTILINI.

2. DURING FEBRUARY 26 MEETING ON OTHER TOPICS, DEFMIN AVEROFF RESPONDED TO QUERY OF CJUSMAGG REGARDING TURKISH TASMO OF FEBRUARY 25-26 BY SAYING THAT THIS HAD IN FINAL ANALYSIS POSED NO PROBLEM, BUT THAT PROJECTED MARCH 9-10
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EXERCISE WAS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MATTER. HE SAID THAT GOG

COULD NOT TOLERATE HAVING GREEK TERRITORY CUT OFF, EVEN FOR TWO-HOUR PERIODS. HE WAS ADAMANT IN HIS STATEMENT THAT GOG WOULD NOT ISSUE NOTAM AS REQUESTED BY GOT. CIJSMAGG REPORTED THIS EXCHANGE TO DAO, WHICH FOLLOWED UP MATTER WITH RESULTS REPORTED REFTEL.

3. ALTHOUGH THE GOT NOTIFICATION APPEARS TO BE LEGALLY UNEXCEPTIONABLE, AND THE GOG PROBABLY WILL SUGGEST THAT TWO HALVES OF THE EXERCISE AREA BE UTILIZED AT DIFFERENT TIMES, A FAILURE BY THE GOT TO ACCEPT THIS SUGGESTION COULD CREATE A VERY REAL POLITICAL PROBLEM. WE BELIEVE THIS PROBLEM IS ONE WHICH THE USG OUGHT NOT TO LET GROW TO UNMANAGEABLE PROPORTIONS WITHOUT TAKING ACTION. WE WILL BE WATCHING THIS SITUATION CAREFULLY IN THE NEXT TEN DAYS AND MAY WISH TO RECOMMEND ACTION BY THE USG, SHOULD THE SITUATION THEN WARRANT IT.
KUBISCH

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